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INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA IMMEDIATE 1119

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NOFORN
E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, ID, PO, PT, AS

SUBJECT: BRIEFING MEMO: LATEST PORTUGUESE TIMOR DEVELOPMENTS
FOR THE SECRETARY FROM EA - ROBERT H. MILLER, ACTING
WARNING NOTICE - SENSITIVE INTELLIGENCE SOURCES AND
METHODS INVOLVED

1. CURRENT SITUATION - THE UNILATERAL DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE BY THE LEFT-WING FRETILIN PARTY ON NOVEMBER 28 HAS PRODUCED STEPPED-UP PRESSURE ON PRESIDENT SUHARTO, PRIMARILY FROM HIS CHIEF MILITARY ADVISORS, FOR AN INCREASE IN INDONESIAN MILITARY INTERVENTION IN PORTUGUESE TIMOR.

....

.... OUR JUDGMENT IS THAT NO DRAMATIC STEP UP IN INDONESIAN INTERVENTION WILL TAKE PLACE AT LEAST UNTIL PRESIDENT FORD HAS DEPARTED INDONESIA

AND THAT SUHARTO REMAINS SENSITIVE TO THE PROBLEMS OF POSSIBLY EMBARRASSING THE UNITED STATES. (WARNING NOTICE - SENSITIVE INTELLIGENCE SOURCES AND METHODS IN-

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VOLVED).

2. MILITARY BALANCE - PART OF SUHARTO'S DILEMMA APPEARS TO BE OCCASIONED BY THE FACT THAT FRETILIN FORCES HAVE SO FAR PROVED MUCH TOUGHER IN BATTLE AND THE INDONESIAN-SUPPORTED TIMORESE ELEMENTS (AS WELL AS THE INDONESIAN FORCES THEMSELVES) MUCH LESS COMBAT EFFECTIVE THAN JAKARTA HAD ORIGINALLY EXPECTED. FRETILIN'S UNILATERAL DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE RAISES THE FURTHER SPECTRE IN JAKARTA'S EYES THAT IF THE FIGHTING GOES ON MUCH LONGER, FRETILIN MAY GAIN CREDIBILITY AND INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT.

3. DIPLOMATIC DEVELOPMENTS - AS A DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVE FRETILIN'S DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE APPEARS SO FAR TO HAVE HAD LITTLE IMPACT. ONLY MOZAMBIQUE HAS RECOGNIZED THE NEW REGIME. AUSTRALIA HAS CALLED FOR AN EARLY RESUMPTION OF NEGOTIATIONS AMONG THE CONTESTING PARTIES AND AN ORDERLY PROCESS OF SELF DETERMINATION. THE INDONESIAN GOVERNMENT HAS PUBLICLY ACCUSED LISBON OF ABANDONING ITS RESPONSIBILITY FOR TIMOR BY ITS PASSIVE ATTITUDE, WHICH THE GOI INTERPRETS AS AN ENDORSEMENT OF FRETILIN'S ACTION. JAKARTA HAS PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED ITS INTENTION TO ORGANIZE, PRESUMABLY UNILATERALLY, A REFERENDUM IN THE FUTURE. PORTUGAL ACCUSED FRETILIN OF UNDERMINING ITS EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE AGREEMENT AMONG ALL TIMORESE FACTIONS, THEREBY BLOCKING AN ORDERLY TRANSITION OF POWER, AND BLAMED INDONESIA FOR IGNORING PLEDGES OF NONINTERFERENCE. ON A MORE HOPEFUL NOTE, WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE INDONESIAN, PORTUGUESE AND AUSTRALIAN DELEGATIONS IN NEW YORK ARE NOW TRYING TO WORK OUT A DRAFT RESOLUTION ON TIMOR TO BE PRESENTED TO THE UN FOURTH COMMITTEE ON DECEMBER 4. WE ASSUME IT WILL ECHO EARLIER CALLS FOR AN END TO THE FIGHTING AND A RESUMPTION OF NEGOTIATIONS AMONG THE CONTESTING TIMORESE PARTIES (WHICH WOULD FAVOR INDONESIA DUE TO ITS DE FACTO CONTROL OVER FRETILIN'S RIVAL PARTIES.)

4. TALKING POINTS:

TO COVER THESE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS, WE SUGGEST THAT THE FOLLOWING TALKING POINTS BE SUBSTITUTED FOR THOSE ON PAGE 17 OF YOUR MEMORANDUM TO THE PRESIDENT ON THE VISIT TO JAKARTA:

-- WE RECOGNIZE THE PROBLEM THAT PORTUGUESE TIMOR

POSES FOR INDONESIA, ESPECIALLY THE NOVEMBER 28 FRETILIN DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE. WE APPRECIATE THE RESTRAINT THAT INDONESIA HAS EXERCISED TO DATE.

-- THE PROBLEM ESSENTIALLY IS ONE FOR THE PARTIES DIRECTLY CONCERNED -- INDONESIA, PORTUGAL, AUSTRALIA AND THE TIMORESE PEOPLE -- TO WORK OUT. IF, WITH THE ASSENT OF ITS PEOPLE, THE TERRITORY WERE MERGED WITH INDONESIA, THIS WOULD BE A REASONABLE SOLUTION.

-- WE DO NOT SEE A ROLE FOR THE US IN THIS PROBLEM. OUR CONCERN IS THAT THERE NOT BE UNNECESSARY BLOODSHED AND THAT THE SITUATION NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT OUR FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH THE COUNTRIES INVOLVED. ROBINSON
BT